

## State of the Parish Comments

Good evening, I am Phil McPherson, your St Lawrence Parish Business Manager. On behalf of Father Dave and the Finance Council, it is my pleasure to provide you with an update on the financial health of our Parish. As many of you will remember, upon Father Dave's arrival, he committed to ensuring the sound fiscal management of our Parish. I am happy to report that Father Dave has delivered on his commitment.

Our Parish currently has 490 registered households with well over 1,000 parishioners. Our Hispanic community represents nearly 6% of these registered households and 12% of the School enrollment. On average during 2019, three new households were registered each month; and, we would like to extend a warm welcome to each of these new parishioners.

It is important to recognize that everyone's contributions are meaningful and genuinely appreciated. In 2019, regular parishioner collections were consistent with 2018; and, there were three notable donations.

- First, Father Grace left a very generous \$106,000 bequest to be used for the School;
- Second, a Parishioner established a Church Building Maintenance Endowment that provides interest income of about \$20,000 a year .... every year.
- Third, the Knights of Columbus local council donated a record \$194,000 last year to our Parish; this brings the past 4 years total to more than \$600,000. A substantial portion of the Knight's donations are based on the number of BINGO service hours worked by St Lawrence parishioners. We extend our sincere appreciation and gratitude to those that have worked BINGO and to the Knights for their generosity.

Regarding our School....

The last school fiscal year had income nearly offsetting expense; and, the current school year is forecasted to "break-even". This turnaround in financial performance is primarily the result of

increasing tuition to a responsible level. The tuition increase has been almost entirely offset by the use of “vouchers” and generous parishioner Scholarship gifts. The result of this strategy has the School “breaking-even” without passing costs or financial burden to the families. Rob, the teachers and staff, are to be recognized for their work and this turnaround.

Reflecting on the past year activities.....

We celebrated our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in style – the Anniversary year opened and closed with Candlelight Masses, and there were 18 special events throughout the year highlighted by the Gala dinner attended by nearly 300 people. It was a wonderful year of celebrations and I’d like to extend a “thank you” to the committees and individuals that coordinated these events.

With the arrival of Sue Wilhelm, our Adult Faith Formation Director, the number of Faith Formation opportunities has grown. The Children’s Liturgy of the Word is offered during the Sunday 10:00 mass and Summer Vacation Bible School continues to be available for Grade School children. The traditional CCD classes have been replaced with a new Family Faith Formation program that focuses on parents and children growing in their faith together. Theology on Tap is an opportunity for adults 21 – 40; there are numerous small faith groups and educational opportunities available for adults. In total, \$50,000 was budgeted to support these programs; and, we are prepared to grow this financial support as these activities and participation grow.

Another success is our Deacon’s Food Pantry. 2019 was the Pantry’s first full year of operation; and, during the year, an average of 750 people/month shopped at the Pantry. It is estimated that the Pantry provided groceries for more than 70,000 meals to our community last year. To make this happen, there was over 4,000 volunteer hours; 8,000 pounds of food; and \$37,000 dollars donated to the Pantry last year. Just as importantly and worth sharing... I’ve had clients stop me in the parking lot and say how much they appreciate the respect and dignity they feel while shopping at our Pantry. To all those that donate to this mission, know that your time and generosity is appreciated by many.

In total, St Lawrence has 41 active ministries... and we would like to extend a “Thank You” to everyone that volunteers, participates and brings value to our Parish and Community.

Shifting to building and grounds:

This fall, the County gifted the 901 E Adams property to St Lawrence and we are currently working with the City of Muncie to fund the demolition of the existing structure. With this addition, our campus now has 22 properties that add to just over 5 acres of land.

There has also been considerable investment into the Church:

- \$196,000 has been invested to clean and repair the exterior brick and mortar of the Church. The West Wall was completed last Spring; and, work on the East Wall, Bell Tower, and the reconditioning of the four Bell Tower clock faces is contracted to begin this Spring
- \$24,000 was spent replacing the carpet and finishing the interior wall paneling.
- And, \$17,000 is being invested to replace the 28 year old fire and security systems in the Church and Rectory.
- There have been many smaller projects as well; for example, the reconditioned St. Lawrence Statue; the addition of handicap seating, the installation of security cameras in the TCS building, the addition of Spanish hymnals and a weekly Spanish bulletin, the replacement of the Rectory flooring, repairs to the Rectory bathrooms, minor roof repairs, lintel replacements, electrical panel updates, and more....
- In total, over an 18 month period, more than \$250,000 is being invested to upkeep our Church and Rectory

In addition to these projects; 14% of income is spent on repairs, maintenance and utilities. Our Parish continues to support St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Shop, the Muncie Soup Kitchen and Meridian Health Services by funding the TCS building repair and maintenance costs; and, by subsidizing their utility expenses. I'd like to take a moment to recognize Joe Beatrice and the Maintenance Committee for their foresight, planning and diligent work in maintaining our buildings and grounds.

The St Lawrence staff has grown as our Parish has been able to afford. Approximately 55% of income goes to our Church and School payroll. Combined, the Church and School have 12 full time and 6 part time employees; with, a few others paid on an hourly basis as needed.

Spending for all other line items such as insurance, supplies, legal expense, etc; account for the remaining 13% of income.

So.... After paying for everything outlined above; “where do we stand?”

I am pleased to report that 2019 was the third consecutive year the Parish operated “in the black”. In fact, our bank account balance has over 6 months of operating expense in reserve; and is currently earning about \$1,000 per month in interest.

AND,

This has been accomplished **without** taking out loans and **without** having special fund raising campaigns.

In summary, Our Parish is growing; our ministries are active; the School is operating at break-even; our Church and buildings are being maintained..... and.... the Parish has achieved financial stability. Your collective generosity has made all of this possible – Thank You and Congratulations.

I’d like to thank Father Dave and the Parish Finance Council for their leadership and attention to our Parish finances. It is our collective hope that this review has demonstrated the careful, effective and responsible management of your contributions; and, that St. Lawrence is a Parish living its mission.... “To be a people of prayer – and service – glorifying God.”

Thank you